

Washington Wizards Media Conference

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Jordan Poole

Media Conference



Lakers 134, Wizards 96

JORDAN POOLE: Started off a little bit slow. I just think with our team -- well, granted it was a back-to-back, so normally your legs are a little bit tired, a little bit slow, but we got down early, and it's just really hard to play catch-up in this league. You've got to find ways to probably get off to a better start and give us the chance earlier.

In the first, I think, seven minutes or so, before the first media time-out.

Q. What's been missing offensively these last few games, or call it the last week?

JORDAN POOLE: I mean, I don't know. What do you see? That's an actual question. Just from an outsider's opinion.

Q. My theories?

JORDAN POOLE: Yeah.

Q. Maybe Alex's spacing, Malcolm getting into the paint. Do you think the process of finding the shots you guys have taken has been good, or is there something you guys can do differently?

JORDAN POOLE: In moments like this, you don't want to veer off from the things that we're being taught or the structure or the system. We don't want to veer away from it because it's getting tough.

Personnel-wise it can get a little bit tough. What I've seen over the last month or so, last three weeks is when I'm in ball screens, if they're not in heavy drop, they're coming to double, but the backside is just loaded over heavy. Teams that we're playing are really packing the paint, so it's hard for us to hit the pocket and then make rolls. They're just making us swing it opposite.

We can't lose our confidence when it comes to catch and shoot shots, and I think they're just trying to make us a

jump shooting team, and I think that something that has helped us when we've played good this year is we get out in transition, but we also find ways to get to the paint, and I think teams are just starting to key in a little bit on our personnel and just making us continue to load over and just try to shoot a lot of threes.

When you're not making shots, it's kind of tough right now to change that in game. But we've just got to stick with it, keep trying to get to the plays that we run, the system that we have.

Of course Alex being out and him helping with our 5 spacing brings the 5 out of the paint, but he'll be out for a little bit, so we've just got to find ways to maybe a little bit different of an adjustment. It just goes with a long season.

Q. As competitive as everybody in this locker room is, how do you guys keep the spirits where they need to be in a stretch where you guys are not pleased?

JORDAN POOLE: I mean, we've got to just keep going, just play through it. You've got to find ways to bounce back, find ways to get better, watch film, because no matter what, we'll have a game in a couple of days anyway. We can't feel sorry for ourselves.

This is just a tough part of the league, and I think it's very well-known the position that we're in and where we are in the organization, and guys who are competitors in here, it's just tough. That's not saying we're not going out there trying to win, but it's just tough moments right now.

I think every organization, every team has been through something of this nature, and like I said, we're pretty clear about where we are with our steps and our progress and our organization right now. We've just got to find ways to stay locked in.

We love the game, at the end of the day, and it's something that I try to preach to my guy is we're playing games right now. When the summer comes you'll be be working out for five months, six months, and then you

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come back to training camp and then you have two months of practice. So let's just try to appreciate the fact that we get to get real reps in games. Use all 48 minutes and just try to get better.

Q. Even if you came into the season with some level of expectation of where the franchise was --

JORDAN POOLE: Personally or everybody in the locker room?

Q. Both. Does the degree of the defeats surprise you a little bit? Has it been worse than even you expected?

JORDAN POOLE: It's just a loss, at the end of the day. It's either a loss or it's a W. That's kind of how I look at it. I don't think a lot of guys in here like losing because there are days when you're on the other side of that and you either win by 30 or you win by one.

After the game, it's just a W. Same thing. You've got to just kind ways to get better, regardless of the score, take advantage of where we are right now, just try to use those reps as best you can.

Q. You talked about how teams are packing the paint. How is that impacting your personal performance, and other than making shots, is there something you guys can do to alleviate that?

JORDAN POOLE: Ooh. I mean, it's just tough. I think you guys see the games pretty often. Aside from the ball screen coverages that I'm seeing, some days it's a hard head, some days it's a double. But what's been extremely consistent is they either have a really early pullover if I'm driving to the basket or the help is really pulled over, as well. So on top of me getting doubles or trapped, whenever I do get a little bit of penetration, I'm able to get downhill, it's three guys maybe, three or four people that are just packing the paint. They're just really packing the paint and making me swing it. I mean, the shots that I would take, a lot of them could potentially be forced, but I'm just kind of playing into coverages and just trying to create the best possible shot that I can get for my teammates, and right now it's just a lot of catch and shoots, and they're just making us a shooting team. I'm not really trying to shoot over two or three contested people. Obviously there will be some times where I'll have to, but like I said, I think they're just playing us to our personnel right now, and if we could find a way to try to create some more spacing or try to instill some confidence in the guys to just knock down the open catch and shoots that they get, I don't think I'll see the coverages changing until we just start knocking shots down.

What do you think? Do you guys see that, as well? Y'all watch the games. Y'all watch all the games. Y'all be here.

Q. A lot of attention going to you.

JORDAN POOLE: Yeah, that's just been the scouting report. Pull over heavy, come over extremely early, make a swing to the backside and if we catch and shoot -- a lot of people are just kind of sitting on our shots right now, now we're just driving into the paint where there are also two or three more people to help.

You guys watch film, learn, see what you can do to combat that. But honestly, it's like a fun part of the challenge. Even if it doesn't feel like it's helping you as an individual and as a team, as well.

Q. You were on a team that struggled a lot your first year, as well, with Golden State. How did you continue developing amid a bunch of losses?

JORDAN POOLE: I was just telling our young fellas this earlier today. We'd be down -- we'd probably be down like 15, 20 points, and they'd throw me in and I'd be playing the last eight minutes. I'm forcing it the last eight minutes. I'm trying to go get a bucket until the last second. I'm trying to get an extra rep until the last second. I'm trying to tell them, regardless of the differential of the score, those are extra reps. Those are extra game reps. Who cares if the other team thinks you look crazy by trying to go get a bucket with four seconds left and you're down 40? I don't care; use this as a rep because it may not help you for the next game, but it may help you for next year, may help you for two years.

If there's anything I can say confidently worked, it was those moments. Just continuing just to be aggressive and just play all the way until the buzzer is up, and then over the course of my career, that honestly has helped. So I just tried to instill that into our young guys, as well. Just continue to play, use every rep that you can because it won't hurt you.

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